



NEW SOUTH WALES NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION
AUSTRALIAN NURSING AND MIDWIFERY FEDERATION NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH



POLICY ON THE PROVISION OF PERSONAL CARE

Re-Endorsed by Annual Conference 2018

NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association
50 O'Dea Avenue Waterloo NSW 2017

P 02 8595 1234 (metro) • 1300 367 962 (regional)

www.nswnma.asn.au

Policy on the Provision of Personal Care

THE NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION RECOGNISES THAT:

- Widely accepted research clearly demonstrates relationships between nursing and midwifery staffing levels and skills mix and the adequacy, safety and quality of patient care¹.
- There are many individuals, who, because of illness, disability, age or frailty, are unable to undertake the full range of everyday tasks that people normally do for themselves. These people require assistance and support with personal care.
- The term personal care describes the assistance with daily living tasks that is provided to individuals regardless of the setting in which the care is provided, whether or not the care provider and the care recipient are related to one another, and whether or not the care provider is paid¹.
- The provision of personal care to individuals in the community enables them to live independently and facilitates their integration and participation in the community.
- The provision of personal care to individuals in institutional or residential settings should also facilitate residents' privacy, autonomy, independence, and dignity, and where possible promote care in a homelike environment.
- The provision of personal care necessarily involves the performance of intimate activities and therefore requires respect for individuals' dignity, independence and choice.

THE NSW NURSES AND MIDWIVES' ASSOCIATION ADOPTS THE POLICY THAT:

1. Any person requiring assistance with personal care has, by definition, some degree of self-care deficit.
2. Personal care activities may be provided by a range of people including: family members, home help or home care workers, health aides, nurses (registered or enrolled), assistants in nursing or other unlicensed workers (however titled). The appropriate person to provide personal care can only be determined based on the needs of the person requiring care and the care activity to be provided.
3. Where the person requiring care is not able to assess their own care needs, plan their care or direct the care provider in meeting their specific needs or any variations which may arise over time, assessment by a registered nurse is required. The registered nurse should assess the person's care needs, plan the care and provide the care or determine the most appropriate carer to meet the assessed care needs.
4. The nursing assessment should consider:



- a. The health status of the person;
 - b. The extent of the self-care deficit; and,
 - c. The complexity of the care required in relation to the health status of the individual.
5. Following this assessment, the registered nurse should determine whether the complexity of care required is such that it necessitates nursing care. In circumstances where nursing care is required, personal care should be provided by an appropriately qualified nurse as an integral component of the required nursing care.
6. Where the health status of the person requiring care is stable, the person has been assessed as not requiring nursing care and the person retains responsibility for monitoring their own ongoing health and directing the care provider, personal care may be provided by non-nursing workers.

NOTE

1. The term 'personal care' is often used in a way that encompasses activities that do not involve direct care e.g. housekeeping, gardening, shopping and preparing meals. For the purposes of this policy document personal care refers to only direct care activities.

REFERENCE

1. Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation, Staffing of Nursing and Midwifery services Policy: http://anmf.org.au/documents/policies/P_Staffing_of_Nursing_Midwifery_Services.pdf.